AGENDA ITEM III B

PROPOSED ACADEMIC PROGRAM

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

Certificate in Assistive Technology
(CIP Code 14.0501)

STAFF COMMENTS

Louisiana Tech University proposes the establishment of a post-baccalaureate Certificate program in Assistive Technology through the Center for Rehabilitation Science and Biomedical Engineering. The Center already offers both the M.S. and Ph.D. programs in Biomedical Engineering. The proposed program, funded through a U.S. Department of Education grant through 2003, is to be delivered solely through distance learning technologies. Completion of the 15-credit curriculum will lead to professional certification as an Assistive and Rehabilitation Technologist through the Rehabilitative Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) and credits earned may be used to fulfill specialization area requirements within the M.S. degree in Biomedical Engineering.

STAFF SUMMARY

DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES

The program will require completion of 15-hours of graduate credit to be offered through distance learning technologies. Students will be able to complete the required course of study on a part-time basis within two years. Graduates will be prepared to assist individuals with a disability in the selection, acquisition, and use of assistive technology devices used to maintain or improve their functional capabilities.

NEED

The proposed program would be the only one of its kind in Louisiana. Assistive Technology certification has become a requirement for practicing professionals. Student interest is strong, as evidenced by enrollment of twenty students in the first course offered.

STUDENTS

Twenty students enrolled in the first course offered last academic year. It is expected that this number will increase once the program is approved and its reputation/availability has become established. Twenty graduates per year are anticipated.

FACULTY

Eleven current faculty at the University will deliver the proposed program. No additional faculty resources will be required.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum will consist of seven courses totaling 15 hours of credit. All coursework is currently offered to fulfill curricular requirements of the M.S./Ph.D. program in Biomedical Engineering; hence, no new courses will be required.

LIBRARY/LEARNING RESOURCES

Current library resources are adequate. The program will utilize web-based resources extensively which are already available to the University.

FACILITIES/EQUIPMENT

Classroom facilities are not required as the program is web-based and/or disseminated through CD ROM. Course development and dissemination is facilitated through an existing distance education laboratory. All faculty have well-equipped offices with state-of-the-art computers.

ADMINISTRATION

The proposed program will be housed in the Center for Rehabilitation Science and Biomedical Engineering.

ACCREDITATION

The Biomedical Engineering programs at the University are accredited through the Accrediting Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET); the proposed program will be included within that accreditation. Graduates of the program will be eligible for professional certification through RESNA.

COSTS

No additional state costs are anticipated. Federal funding through the U.S. Department of Education to offer the proposed program is available through 2003 and existing University revenues will be used to cover any other expenditures.

STAFF SUMMARY

The staff supports this proposal from Louisiana Tech University. The proposal is well-designed and visionary in its use of distance learning technologies to serve the needs of the State's citizenry and the

Assistive Technology profession.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant approval for the proposed post-baccalaureate program Certificate in Assistive Technology (CIP Code 14.0501) at Louisiana Tech University.